GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3781
ANSWERED ON:16.08.2001
PRE AND POST HARVEST FACILITY FOR FARMERS
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the farmers have to suffer heavy financial losses due to lack of pre and post harvest facilities in the agricultural sector in the country;

(b) if so, the assessment made by the Government in this regard;

(c) whether the Government have formulated any time bound scheme and set any target to bring improvements in this sector; and

(d) if so, the outlines thereof and the estimated amount likely to be spent on implementation of the aforesaid schemes?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD Y. NAIK)

(a) & (b): While the exact quantum of pre and post-harvest losses is not known, different studies have indicated varying degree of post-harvest losses in foodgrains. For example:-

- A Committee headed by Dr. V.G. Panse in its report submitted in 1968, had estimated annual post-harvest losses in foodgrains in various stages at 9.33%.

- A survey conducted by Directorate of Marketing and inspection, Government of India,during 1973-74 had estimated post-harvest losses in foodgrains to be about 5%.

- A joint study conducted by Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute and IndianGrain Storage Management and Research Institute during 1985-88 had estimated total post-Harvest loss in wheat at about 4.12%.

In case of fruits and vegetables, according to a Sub-Working Group on Post HarvestManagement, Marketing and Export for the 9th Plan, the wastage of fruits and vegetables ranges from 8-37% at various stages of handling after harvesting, due to inadequate post-harvest infrastructure and lack of cool chain handling like pre-cooling, reefer vans, etc.

(c) & (d): To bring about improvement in post-harvest losses, no targets have been fixed as it is a continuous process. However, in order to reduce losses to foodgrains during the post- harvest period, the Government of India launched Save Grain Campaign in 1969-70. Training, demonstration and publicity in the field of scientific storage of foodgrains at the farm level, improvement of grain storage structures and other activities are carried out by the Save Grain Campaign for the benefit of farmers. There is a budget provision of Rs.6.33 crores for implementation of this scheme during 2001-2002.

The National Horticulture Board (NHB), which is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Agriculture, is implementing the following schemes for strengthening the post-harvest management infrastructure and minimizing post-harvest losses:-

(i). Capital investment subsidy for construction/expansion/modernization of cold storages and storages for horticulture produce. There is a budget provision of Rs.65.00 crores under this scheme during 2001-2002.

(ii). Development of commercial horticulture through production and post harvest management of horticultural products. There is a budget provision of Rs.12.10 crores under this scheme during 2001-02.